

REMARKS

Applicant's undersigned representative thanks Examiner Fadok for speaking with him and his colleague Brian Landry by telephone on March 15, 2007, to discuss the final Office action.

Claims 1-35 are currently pending in the application. Independent claims 1, 9, and 17 are amended by this Response, and claims 30-35 are added. No new matter is introduced by any of these claim changes and additions, and support for all claim changes and additions can be found throughout the originally-filed application and at, for example, paragraphs [0025] through [0028].

Claims 1-7, 9-15, and 17 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) over U.S. Patent 5,974,395 to Bellini et al. (hereinafter "Bellini") and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0225637 to Pemberton et al. (hereinafter "Pemberton"). Applicant traverses this rejection.

Of these rejected claims, the only rejected independent claims are claims 1, 9, and 17. Each of amended independent claims 1, 9, and 17 recites in part the control of "interactions between the customer and other customers, the supplier, and other suppliers by restricting the other customers and the suppliers with which the customer can interact."

Bellini simply is completely silent on at least this aspect of the amended independent claims.

While Pemberton discloses communication (*see, e.g.*, Pemberton ¶ [0013], [0035]), Pemberton also is silent about at least the above-recited aspect of the amended independent claims. (Pemberton discloses "interface means being adapted to enable communication between a user and one or more suppliers." *Id.*, ¶ [0013]. Pemberton discloses that the "further interface means may also be adapted to communicate requests to supply from a user, and the interface means may be adapted to receive offers from said primary suppliers and/or product secondary suppliers." *Id.*)

Given that each of Bellini and Pemberton is silent with respect to at least this one aspect of amended independent claims 1, 9, and 17, no combination of Bellini and Pemberton would or could have resulted in the subject matter of claims 1, 9, or 17.

Claims 8, 16, and 18-29 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) over Bellini, Pemberton, and Official Notice. Applicant also traverses this rejection.

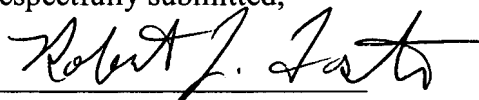
Each of these rejected claims depends from amended independent claims 1, 9, or 17. As indicated above, amended independent claims 1, 9, and 17 are patentable over Bellini and/or Pemberton. The Official Notice fails to cure the indicated defect of Bellini and Pemberton with respect to amended independent claims 1, 9, and 17, and thus adding the Official Notice to Bellini and/or Pemberton would and could not have resulted in the subject matter of claims 1, 9, or 17.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, applicant requests reconsideration, withdrawal of all rejections, and allowance of all claims (i.e., claims 1-35) in due course.

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Respectfully submitted,



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